

1987 Queensland Cabinet Minutes

Queensland State Archives

1987 timeline

1 November 1986	National Party wins election in its own right (1983 relied upon defection of two Liberals)
12 January 1987	Phil Dickie article in the Courier Mail in which he identifies two main groups running Queensland's thriving sex industry.
31 January 1987	Bjelke-Petersen launches Joh for PM campaign at Wagga Wagga.
7 February 1987	Bjelke-Petersen reported in Courier Mail as saying PM job 'down the road'.
13 February 1987	Meeting between Ian Sinclair (federal parliamentary leader of the National Party) and Bjelke-Petersen. Lasted only 30 mins and Bjelke-Petersen refused to call a 'truce' with the federal LNP opposition. He also addressed public meeting in Alice Springs claiming it as the venue where the 'war' began...as opposed to Wagga Wagga where the Joh for PM campaign was launched.
21 February 1987	The Courier Mail reports on the Savage Committee report on red tape reduction before Cabinet – recommending a formal review of Local Government Act with representatives of Public Service Board, LGA, BCC, Urban Development Institute & Queensland Confederation of Industry. In a separate article, Lord Mayor Atkinson supports findings of Savage Report.
27 February 1987	Queensland National Party Central Council voted to withdraw from federal coalition. (Courier Mail 28/2/87)
14 March 1987	Courier Mail reports Queensland has highest unemployment rate, lowest job vacancy rate, highest fall in residential building starts (Senator Garry Jones (ALP))

5 April 1987	Advertisement depicting the Grim Reaper knocking down a diverse range of people like pins in a bowling alley was first screened , kicking off the Commonwealth's public response to the AIDS epidemic
10 April 1987	National Party Queensland, State Management Committee ordered Queensland's federal members to leave the coalition.
13 April 1987	Courier Mail published an article by Phil Dickie focused on illegal casinos.
18 April 1987	Courier Mail published an article by Phil Dickie focused on prostitution and the apparent immunity from prosecution of the main operators.
28 April 1987	Allan Callaghan, former long term media advisor to Bjelke-Petersen sentenced to 4 years jail with hard labour for misappropriation of public funds.
28 April 1987	Ian Sinclair takes National Party out of Federal Coalition to avoid conflict between Queensland National MPs and their colleagues from other states.
11 May 1987	The Moonlight State – 4 Corners Program broadcast by ABC: organised crime and its links to police corruption detailed.
13 May 1987	Keating (then federal treasurer) delivers a comprehensive Economic Statement
16 May 1987	Terry Lewis (police commissioner, later imprisoned for corruption) visits Bjelke-Petersen at Bethany but found him distracted by his federal aspirations and difficult to engage on risks of inquiry.....
18 May 1987	Roma Cabinet Meeting at which it was agreed Tony Fitzgerald would head inquiry.
26 May 1987	Initial Terms of Reference for Fitzgerald Inquiry gazetted.
27 May 1987	Hawke announces early election. Bjelke-Petersen in Disneyland!
3 June 1987	Bjelke-Petersen decides not to run for a federal seat.

24 June 1987	Terms of Reference for Fitzgerald Inquiry extended.
11 July 1987	Labor wins federal election with increased majority with Australian Democrats retaining balance of power in the Senate.
27 July 1987	Public Hearings of Fitzgerald Inquiry commence
3 August 1987	Queensland report (Law & Powder) report on Aboriginal Deaths in custody released.
10 August 1987	PM Hawke announced formation of Royal Commission of Inquiry into Aboriginal Deaths in custody.
31 August 1987	Harry Burgess gives evidence: first police officer to “roll over” and acknowledge systemic police corruption.
15 September 1987	In response to a call from Fitzgerald for honest police to come forward to give evidence, Col Dillon, the first Aboriginal police officer in Queensland gave evidence.
17 September 1987	Assistant Police Commissioner, Graeme Parker resigns, admits his corruption to Fitzgerald investigators. Fitzgerald adjourns inquiry to enable legislative changes, giving greater powers to compel witnesses to appear
21 September 1987	Terry Lewis stood aside by Bjelke-Petersen after he refused directive from Gunn.
October	Assent of Commission of Inquiry Amendment Act
October	Central Council Meeting of National Party – Bjelke-Petersen foreshadows his retirement on 8 August 1988
3 November 1987	Graeme Parker gives evidence, names Don Lane (then Transport Minister but former Special Branch police officer) among others as corrupt.
5 November 1987	National Party Conference in Townsville – breakdown in relationship between Sparkes and Bjelke-Petersen public – major changes in policy

November 1987	National Party Parliamentary Meeting – Huan Fraser challenges Bjelke-Petersen re his receipt of payments if Central Place, the world tallest building proceeded. Bjelke-Petersen tried to close the meeting but Fraser countered by saying if he did not respond, he would ask the question outside (where journalist Tony Koch was apparently waiting.)
16 November 1987	Queensland manager of the TAB gives evidence at the Inquiry, giving evidence on the close relationship between Terry Lewis and Bjelke-Petersen's close friend, Edward Lyons (known as Top Level Ted)
23 November 1987	Bjelke-Petersen (without any mention at that day's Cabinet meeting) wrote to the Governor, indicating he wished to restructure Cabinet and proposed the resignations of all members of the Cabinet. Governor refused. Bjelke-Petersen then called in five Ministers and demanded their resignations. All refused.
24 November 1987	Bjelke-Petersen wrote to Governor, indicating 3 Ministers were no longer prepared to conform to his policies and their commissions should be withdrawn. The Governor agreed. The sackings caused a furore.
26 November 1987	Bjelke-Petersen refuses to attend National Party Management Committee meeting. A meeting was then held of the Parliamentary wing at which all positions were declared vacant and Ahern was elected leader. Ahern wrote to the Governor, seeking a commission to form government. Governor did not agree but encouraged Ahern to seek Bjelke-Petersen's resignation.
29 November 1987	Bjelke-Petersen met with Peter Beattie (then state secretary of ALP) in a paddock at his property. While he offered to drop defamation writs, provide more resources to the ALP, he was not prepared to agree to a fair electoral redistribution. On this basis, Beattie was not prepared to agree.
30 November 1987	Bjelke-Petersen chaired his last Cabinet meeting.
1 December 1987	Bjelke-Petersen resigns as Premier.